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ABSTRACT

Whether or not there are significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate (SC) and their levels of job satisfaction (JS) was studied. From a random sample of 30 public secondary (grades 9 through 12) schools in Mississippi, one teacher from each of the subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies was randomly selected. The number of respondents polled in December of 1989 and January of 1990 was 120 teachers. Subjects were administered the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Teacher Satisfaction Survey, and the NASSP School Climate Survey. A total of 100 surveys was returned (a response rate of 83%). The data were hand scored and recorded on a computer disk, and analyzed with analysis of variance and factorial analysis of variance. In general, the data reveal a significant relationship between respondents' perceptions of SC and JS. Teachers with high levels of JS indicated a more favorable impression of SC than did teachers with low levels of JS. The results support the findings of P. D. Sistrunk (1982) in that the levels of satisfaction were related to perception of supervisory behavior, and the subject taught made no difference in the relationship between perception of SC and supervisory behavior. There was a significant positive correlation between teacher satisfaction with the SC and teacher perception of the principal's leadership behavior. Teachers who were dissatisfied with the SC were also dissatisfied with the principal's leadership behavior. Eight data tables are included. (RLC)

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The Relationship Between Secondary Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Their Perceptions of School Climate

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Introduction

School climate and teacher satisfaction are areas that greatly influence the outcome of the educational process. A positive school climate is seen as a platform upon which productive learning and teacher job satisfaction can be built (Flanaghan, 1983). Research shows that the social climate of the school and the level of faculty satisfaction can be positive influences on pupil attitudes and learning. Studies show that teachers who feel good about themselves and their abilities are more likely to experience success in their teaching careers (Adams & Bailey, 1989). Results of an American Association of School Administrators' study indicated that professional autonomy, daily recognition, and involvement in decision making help build teacher job satisfaction. Strengthening job satisfaction in the school environment resulted in improved productivity in the schools (Brodinsky, 1984).

Educational reform mandates that teachers be agents of change; therefore, the importance of teacher satisfaction cannot be overlooked. Leslie (1989) found that dissatisfied teachers weaken educational programs and that basic human relations principles can help administrators meet teachers' needs. She also found that teachers can learn to cope with many of the stresses of

their jobs if they develop a positive self-image.

A major recommendation in "The Carnegie Report--A Call for Redesigning the Schools" was that schools be restructured in ways that transform teaching into worthwhile careers which produce the greatest possible gains for all students. The Carnegie Report called for an incentive structure for teachers and the need for teachers to be vested with greater participation in making professional judgements (Tucker & Mandel, 1986). A closer look at the interaction of societal, institutional, and personal factors should provide insight into the relationship of teacher satisfaction and school climate.

Statement of the Problem

In an effort to determine if there were significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate and their levels of job satisfaction, a study was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. Was there a significant difference in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the NASSP School Climate Survey when

compared to high and low perceptions of teacher satisfaction as measured by the NASSP Teacher Satisfaction Survey?

2. Were there significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the NASSP Teacher Climate survey when compared to high and low perceptions of teacher satisfaction as measured by the NASSP Teacher Satisfaction Survey when the subscale scores of the School Climate Survey were compared to the total scores of the Teacher Satisfaction Survey?

3. Were there significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the NASSP School Climate Survey when compared to high and low perceptions of teacher satisfaction as measured by the NASSP Teacher Satisfaction Survey when the variable of subject taught was considered?

4. Were there significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the NASSP School Climate Survey when compared to high and low perceptions of teacher satisfaction as measured by the NASSP Teacher Satisfaction Survey when the variable of elected or appointed district superintendents was considered?

Population and Sample

The population consisted of all public secondary schools in Mississippi. The sample was stratified by percentage of school districts with either elected superintendents or appointed superintendents. A random sample of 30 public secondary schools (13 from elected districts, 17 from appointed districts) which contained any or all of grades nine through twelve where the principal had served at least one year was selected, using a table of random numbers from a State Department of Education list of schools and attendance centers. One teacher from each of the subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies was randomly selected from each of the 30 selected schools; thus the number of respondents polled was 120 teachers. If there were selected

teachers who could not participate in the study, other teachers from the same school and subject area were randomly selected. A total of 100 usable surveys were returned for a total of 83 percent of the sample. The data were collected in December of 1989 and January of 1990.

Insert Table 1 about here

Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study: The NASSP Teacher Satisfaction Survey and the NASSP School Climate Survey. These instruments are from the NASSP Comprehensive Assessment of School Environments which were validated in national pilot and normative studies of 1,500 teachers, 14,600 students, and 4,400 parents (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1987).

The NASSP School Climate Survey was normed for use with students in grades six through twelve and for use with teachers, parents and citizen groups. The NASSP School Climate Survey was used to collect data about

perceptions on 10 subscales: Teacher-Student Relationships, Security and Maintenance, Administration, Student Academic Orientation, Student Behavioral Values, Guidance, Student-Peer Relationships, Parent and Community-School Relationships, Instructional Management, and Student Activities.

The NASSP Teacher Satisfaction Survey was used to collect data about teacher perceptions on nine subscales: Administration, Compensation, Opportunities for Advancement, Student Responsibility and Discipline, Curriculum and Job Tasks, Co-Workers, Parents and Community, School Buildings, and Communication.

The instrument reliabilities are as follows: The average internal consistency reliability of the School Climate Survey subscales is 0.81, with a range of 0.73 to 0.87. The Teacher Satisfaction Survey subscales average internal consistency reliability is 0.85, with a range of 0.80 to 0.93.

Insert Table 2 about here

Insert Table 3 about here

Analysis of Data

The data were hand scored and recorded on a computer disk for analysis at the Thomas E. Tramel Computing Center at Mississippi State University. Analysis of variance was used to answer questions one and two. Factorial analysis of variance was used to answer questions three and four. The total scores on the NASSP Teacher Satisfaction Survey were divided into high and low with the high group scoring at the mean or above and the low group scoring below the mean. These scores were compared to the ten subscales of the NASSP School Climate Survey.

In determining the grouping of low job satisfaction scores and high job satisfaction scores, the mean score on the Teacher Satisfaction Survey of 186.02 was determined. The low satisfaction group scored below the mean on the overall Teacher Satisfaction Survey and the high satisfaction group scored at the mean or above. There was greater variance in scores of those teachers

expressing low job satisfaction resulting in a larger standard deviation of scores for this group. The scores of teachers expressing average or above job satisfaction had less variance in scores and a smaller standard deviation. The data for the division of the two groups are depicted in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

Question one sought to determine if there were significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the School Climate Survey when compared to high and low perceptions of job satisfaction as measured by the Teacher Satisfaction Survey. Examination of the data revealed that there was a significant difference between teachers' perceptions of school climate and high and low perceptions of job satisfaction. Those teachers with a high level of job satisfaction reported a more favorable impression of the school climate than did those teachers expressing low job satisfaction. An F value of 48.01 was found for the difference in School Climate Survey scores and high and low scores on the

Teacher Satisfaction Survey. An F value of 10.83 indicates significance at the .001 level. These data are shown in Table 5.

Insert Table 5 about here

Question two sought to determine if there were significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the School Climate Survey when compared to high and low perceptions of job satisfaction as measured by the Teacher Satisfaction Survey when the subscale scores of the School Climate Survey were considered. The data indicated significant differences between all subscale scores of the School Climate Survey and low and high perceptions of teacher satisfaction as measured by the Teacher Satisfaction Survey. Teachers reporting high levels of job satisfaction expressed a more favorable perception of the school climate as measured by each subscale than those teachers reporting low job satisfaction. Examination of the data revealed a significant difference at the .05 level between high and low teacher satisfaction and subscale one, Teacher-Student

Relationships with an F value of 7.64 and subscale seven, Student-Peer Relationships, with an F value of 10.65. A significant difference was indicated at the .001 level for the other eight subscale scores of Security and Maintenance (F=12.70); Administration (F=32.78); Student Academic Orientation (F=24.12); Guidance (F=11.60); Student Behavior Values Relationships (F=15.64); Parent and Community-School Relationships (F=15.06); Instructional Management (F=26.68); and Student Activities (F=32.49). Examination of the data shown in Table 6 reveals the results of the analyses of the data between high and low job satisfaction and each of the subscales of the School Climate Survey.

Insert Table 6 about here

Question three sought to determine if there were significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate

as measured by the School Climate Survey when compared to high and low perceptions of job satisfaction as measured by the Teacher Satisfaction Survey when the variable of subject taught was considered. The data shown in Table 7 indicates that there were no significant differences between teachers' perceptions of school climate when compared to low and high perceptions of teacher satisfaction when the variable of subject taught (English, mathematics, science, and social studies) was considered. The minimum F value needed to establish significance at the .05 level was 3.84; thus the obtained F value of .71 indicated no statistical significance.

Insert Table 7 about here

Question four sought to determine if there were significant differences in Mississippi public secondary school teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the School Climate Survey when compared to high and low perceptions of teacher satisfaction as measured by the Teacher Satisfaction

Survey when the variable of elected or appointed district superintendents was considered. The variable of type of district, elected or appointed superintendent, was investigated in this question.

Insert Table 8 about here

Examination of the data shown in Table 8 revealed no significant difference in perception of school climate and low and high job satisfaction when the variable of type of district is considered. The F value obtained was .06 and a minimum F value of 3.84 was needed for statistical significance at the .05 level.

Conclusions

In general, examination of these data revealed a significant relationship between respondents' perceptions of school climate and job satisfaction. Those teachers with high levels of job satisfaction indicated a more favorable

impression of school climate than those teachers with low levels of job satisfaction. Those teachers with high levels of job satisfaction reported more favorable impressions of the school climate as measured by each of the subscale scores of the School Climate Survey than did teachers with low levels of job satisfaction.

The results of this study support the findings of Patricia Sistrunk (1982) who concluded that levels of satisfaction were related to perceptions of supervisory behavior. Sistrunk's findings paralleled the results of the present study in that the variable of subject taught made no difference in the relationship between perception of school climate and supervisory behavior. The findings of Sistrunk, Johnson, and Kennebrew (1989) were congruent with the findings of this research in that they reported a significant positive correlation between teacher satisfaction with the school climate and teacher perception of the principal's leader behavior. They also reported that teachers who were dissatisfied with the school climate were also dissatisfied with the principal's leader behavior which parallels the findings of this study. Kennebrew (1988) found a positive correlation between perception of school climate and perceived collaborative supervisory behaviors of school leaders

which supports this researcher's conclusions of a significant relationship between school climate and perceptions of work place or job satisfaction. The findings of the present study agreed with the conclusions of Kennebrew and other researchers in that the variable of subject taught made no significant difference in correlation between supervisory behavior and school climate.

The results of this study also indicate that job satisfaction and school climate are significantly related. This supports Dobson and Dobson's (1980) assertion that self-concept guides the perceptions of the individual and their conclusion that the self-concept of teachers, in part, determines their perceptions of school climate and job satisfaction. Hughes, McNelis, and Hoggard's (1989) findings are congruent with those of Dobson and Dobson in that teachers with higher self-concepts are found to be more resistant to stress and more likely to maintain a sense of personal accomplishment than those with lower self-concepts. Bandura (1982) emphasized the importance of self-efficacy as a determinant for the behavior of teachers. The findings of Bandura's study support those of Sergiovanni (1982) and others who found that perceptions of job satisfaction and school climate operate in bidirectional dimensions rather than the perception of school climate. The present

researcher, after analyzing the data in this study, concurs with Pallas'(1988) conclusion that a significant relationship between school climate and job satisfaction exists. However, no claim is made that a ~~casual~~ causal relationship between teacher job satisfaction and school climate exists.

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Appendices

TABLE 1

Distribution of Usable Responses from Teachers

by Type of School District and Subject Taught*

	Total Sample	Number of Usable Responses	Response Percentage
Appointed Superintendent	68	56	82.4
Elected Superintendent	52	44	84.6
English	30	26	86.7
Mathematics	30	26	86.7
Science	30	26	86.7
Social Studies	30	25	83.3

*Data were used from equal number of teachers by subject area which necessitated the omission of responses from teachers where there was not a complete set of responses from all subject areas.

TABLE 2

SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

Internal Consistency Estimates of Reliability

(Teachers)

Subscale Name	Number of Items	n	Cronbach's alpha
Teacher-Student Relationships	12	1,442	.87
Security and Maintenance	7	1,595	.85
Administration	6	1,585	.85
Student Academic Orientation	4	1,643	.83
Student Behavioral Values	3	1,611	.73
Guidance	4	1,588	.84
Student-Peer Relationships	4	1,624	.80
Parent & Community-School Relationships	4	1,431	.79
Instructional Management	7	1,578	.79
Student Activities	4	1,479	.79

TABLE 3

TEACHER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Internal Consistency Estimates of Reliability

Subscale Name	Number of Items	n	Cronbach's alpha
Administration	8	1,669	.92
Compensation	5	1,697	.87
Opportunities for Advancement	4	1,384	.93
Student Responsibility and Discipline	5	1,741	.89
Curriculum and Job Tasks	7	1,674	.80
Co-workers	7	1,687	.89
Parents and Community	6	1,480	.88
School Buildings, Supplies, Maintenance	7	1,654	.85
Communication	7	1,583	.87

TABLE 4

Division of Teachers with Low Job Satisfaction

and Teachers with High Job Satisfaction by *Mean Score

on the Teacher Satisfaction Survey

Groups	N	Scores
Teachers Expressing Low Job Satisfaction	46	0-186.01
Teachers Expressing High Job Satisfaction	54	182.02-500

*The mean score was computed to be 186.02 with an N of 100.

TABLE 5

A Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of School Climate and Levels of Job Satisfaction as Determined by Total Score of the School Climate Survey and Low and High Scores of the Teacher Satisfaction Survey

Groups	N	X	SD	F
Teachers Expressing Low Job Satisfaction	46	186.20	19.96	
Teachers Expressing High Job Satisfaction	54	214.02	20.06	48.01*

*$F \geq 10.83$ significant at the .001 level (df 1,98)

TABLE 6

A Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of School Climate as Measured by Subscale Scores of the School Climate Survey and High and Low Levels of Job Satisfaction as Measured by the Teacher Satisfaction Survey

Subscales	Low Satisfaction			High Satisfaction			
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	F
Teacher-Student Relationships	46	45.54	6.39	54	49.04	6.22	7.64*
Security and Maintenance	46	26.04	5.45	54	29.41	3.97	12.70**
Administration	46	19.74	5.11	54	24.70	3.51	32.78**
Student Academic Orientation	46	11.11	2.59	54	13.67	2.60	24.12**
Student Behavior Values	46	7.74	2.59	54	9.65	2.24	15.64**
Guidance	46	15.07	3.10	54	16.85	2.11	11.60**
Student-Peer Relationships	46	13.57	3.24	54	15.28	1.94	10.65*
Parent and Community-School Relationships	46	10.52	3.50	54	13.07	3.08	15.06**
Instructional Management	46	23.22	3.76	54	26.72	3.02	26.68**
Student Activities	46	13.65	1.90	54	15.63	1.57	32.49**

*$F \geq 3.84$ significant at the .05 level (df 1,98)

**$F \geq 10.83$ significant at the .001 level (df 1,98)

TABLE 7

A Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of School Climate as Measured by the School Climate Survey and Low and High Levels of Job Satisfaction as Measured by the Teacher Satisfaction Survey when the Variable of Subject Taught is Considered

Subject Areas	Low Satisfaction		High Satisfaction		F
	N	Adjusted X	N	Adjusted X	
English	11	191.70	14	218.81	
Mathematics	16	182.84	9	209.95	
Science	12	185.70	13	212.81	
Social Studies	7	187.08	18	213.19	
					.71

TABLE 8

A Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of School Climate as Measured by the School Climate Survey and Low and High Levels of Job Satisfaction as Measured by the Teacher Satisfaction Survey when the Variable of Type of School District is Considered

Type of District	Low Satisfaction		High Satisfaction		F
	N	Adjusted X	N	Adjusted X	
Type 1 Appointed Superintendent	24	183.83	32	211.84	
Type 2 Elected Superintendent	22	198.97	22	214.18	
					.06